

OLD HERESY IS BORN AGAIN

Recently we at APOSTOLOS received a letter from the leader of an "ex-gay" group. This individual dealt with the issue of the "reality" of being gay. It is prevalent among "ex-gays" to claim to be cured of their gayness, in spite of a continuing homosexual orientation.

The "ex-gay" movement teaches that in spite of a gay orientation one should claim to be "ex-gay". One new anti-gay polemic SUCH WERE SOME OF YOU carries this statement by the author:

"Truly, I was no longer a homosexual in God's eyes. Surely, I had been washed, justified, and sanctified. Beyond dispute, as far as I was concerned, was the fact that I had a new identity as a man in the Lord. All this was certain in spite of what temptations from my lower carnal nature might still remain to plague me and cause me to cry out for grace from Jesus to live conditionally in light of my new position in Him."

Greg Reid, of the "ex-gay" group Eagle Ministry, says in Pat Boone's book COMING OUT, "There might always be a tendency - a temptation - but I believe that old mistakes and habits should be spoken of in the past tense...."

The "ex-gay" who wrote us had this to say about reality, 'As far as Christians, which we are, shouldn't our reality be based on the word of God only? Isn't that the only "fact or thing that is real?" The world may try and give us another 'reality' but it is only a counterfeit (sic) of the real thing."

This denial of reality isn't new to the religious scene. The idea that one should deny the validity of what one doesn't like by metaphysical means was extolled by one religionist who said, "Everything is as real as you make it and no more so. What you see, hear, feel, is a mode of consciencousness, and can have no other reality then the sense you entertain of it." This same religionist later claimed, "The first idolatrous claim of sin is, that matter exists; the second, that matter is substance...."

The women who wrote these statements founded a religion based on the concept that for Christians, the only reality is that which corresponds with the divine mind of God as revealed in the Scriptures. This system teaches, as does the letter from the "ex-gay" leader, that the world gives us a false reality but that this false reality disappears if we are in accord with the divine mind of God. The religious system I speak of is the cult of Christian Science and the woman in Mark Baker Eddy.

"Ex-gays" will say that they may have homosexual needs, desires and feelings but that they are not homosexual, even though the same needs, desires and feelings before conversion were evidence that one was homosexual. Whether or not every one of the senses tells the individual he is gay the "ex-gays" claim he must deny reality as perceived by the senses and accept a metaphysical stance that says he is "ex-gay". Christian Science teaches a simi-

lar doctrine, "The physical senses give the only pretended testimony there can be as to the existence of a substance called matter.... In other words; matter testifies of itself but unless matter is mind, it cannot talk or testify; and if it is mind; it is certainly not the mind of Christ, not the Mind that is identicle with Truth."

This theological stance has lead Christian Scientist's into the same errors as the "ex-gays", i.e., homosexuality can be "cured". Meanwhile the "ex-gays" have accepted the Christian Science heresy by saying that reality that does not conform with Divine Mind (the will of God) doesn't exist but in essence is simply error.

The following excerpts from an "ex-gay" testimony will reveal what I mean.

"An understanding of the spiritual nature of God and man's reflection of that nature healed me of homosexuality.... After a sexual encounter I would always feel empty, dissatisfied, and extremely guilty. I would make a halfhearted attempt to pray to God about the situation and then forget the whole thing until the next time I was faced with these feelings.... I began to see homosexuality as an infringement on moral law. As I discerned more of my spiritual nature, the desire for homosexual activity left me. I was completely healed.... I had found the truth of God's nature and my relationship in Him, and this in turn brought healing and harmony into my life."

Those who have read the testimonies of "ex-gays" before would probably view this one as just another one of many, except for the fact that it appeared in the October, 1978 issue of the CHRISTIAN SCIENCE JOURNAL. Evangelicals who have gotten involved in the "ex-gay" movement have accepted a theological position inconsistent with orthodox Christianity and totally consistent with the heresies of Mary Baker Eddy.

ANTI-GAYS INFLUENCE CONGRESS

John Birch Society member, Congressman Larry McDonald, has introduced an anti-gay resolution in Congress on July 24, 1979. The bill, HRC 166, says "it is unequivocally clear that consensual sodomy and other homosexual acts should never be accepted as legitimate in this Republic." The bill was introduced at the urging of a far-right organization known as Christian Voice.

Christian Voice has attracted a few Congressmen and Senators to the organization. In spite of the fact that one Christian Voice representative told Newsweek, "We are declaring war on homosexuals." the organization misled Congressmen who joined it. One Congressman, who is a member of Christian Voice, said, "My own views are that there should be no laws impeding homosexuality." When APOSTOLOS contacted this Con-

gressman about the groups anti-gay stance he told us that representatives from Christian Voice assured him "that they in no way consider themselves an 'anti-gay lobby.' The word gay was never mentioned in conversation nor in the voluminous material left in my office." If the Congressman is telling the truth, and we believe he is, then Christian Voice misled him about their all out attack on gays.

Christian Voice is run by the Rev. Robert G. Grant, whose anti-gay efforts are not new. Grant served as Executive Director of Christian Cause. We have here in our files a four page letter filled with the most vitriolic hatred of gays signed by Rev. Grant. Grant said in the letter, "the Gay Liberation movement in this country is calculated to

Continued on next page.

Things we hope interest you

HOMOSEXUALITY AND THE MIRACLE MAKERS, is a well-documented expose of the so-called "ex-gay" movement. No other book, article or pamphlet comes anywhere near amassing the necessary evidence to refute the claims of these so-called miracles. Bill Doubleday of the National Gay Rights Task Force called this booklet "a very interesting and helpful body of evidence about a movement which very much needs to be discredited." SIECUS REPORT of the Sex Information and Education Council of the United States said the booklet "effectively refutes the 'miracle makers' claims of having 'cured' repentant homosexuals. ...The sincerely written and well-documented contents are worth reading." The cost for one copy is \$1.50 postpaid.

THE CHRISTIAN COUNSELOR AND THE HOMOSEXUAL CLIENT is a cassette copy of a paper read by Jim Peron to the Christian Association for Psychological Studies at their 1979 convention. The paper was selected by CAPS as the national winner in their Undergraduate Contest. The paper discusses Biblical reasons for the existence of homosexuality and why it is wrong to demand that gay Christians attempt to become heterosexual. The paper also outlines a morality for gay Christians as well as a goal for Christian counselors who deal with homosexual clients. The cost is \$3.50 per copy.

Orders should be sent to Jim Peron, Box 2140, Glen Ellyn, IL 60137.

challenge and destroy the moral fiber of Christians."

At one time Christian Cause claimed to have polled 2.75 million conservative Christians with a response of 1.6 million. A CC official claims this was done for a cost of around 30 to 40 thousand dollars. Postage to mail 2.75 million letters would total about \$55,000 while the return postage would run about \$250,000.

According to information uncovered by former ADVOCATE associate editor Sasha Gregory-Lewis, Grant achieved tax-exempt status by telling the IRS that funds raised for the parent organization of Christian Cause, the Christian American Liberties League, would be used for such projects as rehabilitation centers for child prostitutes in Jakarta, help for the poor in Manila and for tribesmen in the Philippines. During its first year CALL spent \$71,895 on mail-

ings, publishing, and organizational fees but not one cent helped tribesmen in the Philippines or unfortunate child prostitutes in Jakarta.

CC/CALL helped Senator Briggs with his anti-gay initiative in California by giving \$1,000 to California Save Our Children. Grant told contributors that "in a series of meetings with Senator John Briggs of California, Christian Cause has laid the groundwork to step into the center of the arena on the 'gay rights' issue. Our first step is to put the gay rights issue on the ballot of the November, 1978 California election."

All of this should make it clear that Christian Voice and Rev. Grant are as anti-gay as they come and that they intend to use the coercive power of government to enforce their bigotry.

DID YOU KNOW ?

Anti-gay evangelist James Robison who was thrown off the air by TV station WFAA because of his anti-gay remarks has been reinstated by the station. Robison threatened to take the issue before the Federal Communications Commission and few stations are willing to stand up to the FCC. Meanwhile the FCC has given another anti-gay evangelist Jerry Falwell a radio station. The 100,000 watt FM station will be known as WVOL. Under a free market system Robison would have remained off the air and Falwell would have purchased the station instead of receiving it free. Some foolish members of the gay community have voiced opposition to the free market and advocate the present FCC system. Chicago Gaylife recently editorialized against the deregulation of the broadcast media. Such a stance is to say the most, dumb.

New York Mayor Koch has upheld the socialist practice of business subsidies for the film "Cruising," a movie some gays see as "inflammatory and explosive." The film is supposedly the story of a police officer investigating a series of homosexual murders. A group of New York gays protested what Koch called "the business of this city's administration to encourage the return of film making to New York City by co-operating to whatever extent feasible with film makers." Ethan Geto, a spokesperson for the gays said they were asking the city to "stop allocating taxpayer resources to this particular project" through the Mayor's Office of Motion Pictures and Television. Koch illogically claimed that to stop financing the film with stolen gay taxpayers money would be censorship.

The Rev. Leo McKenzie, a priest known for his anti-gay remarks, was arrested in a New Orleans adult bookstore on the charges of soliciting an undercover police officer for oral sex. McKenzie has constantly spoken out against gays and even debated gay activist Leonard Matlovich on television.

The anti-gay bill similar to the Briggs Initiative that we reported in our June issue as being introduced in the Nevada state legislature has failed to materialized. The bills sponsor, Karen Hayes, withdrew the bill because of lack of support.

Anita Bryant, well-known for her viciously anti-gay attitudes has been rehired by the Florida Citrus Commission for another year. The vote to retain Bryant was unanimous.

The so-called "ex-gay" network EXODUS recently met in Johnstown, PA. Greg Reid, who recently took over as the organizations head resigned his position. We are sorry to hear that shortly thereafter Greg had a car accident that destroyed his Honda.

APOSTOLOS co-editor Jim Peron has been very busy lately. In June he gave a lecture at the Metropolitan Community Church in San Francisco on the "ex-gay" movement. Jim also recently taped a 30 minute television program "Gays and Christianity" in an effort to refute some of the anti-gay programs various evangelicals have aired. The program Jim taped was aired on a Chicago station twice in August. It is possible that Jim will be presenting a talk on the "ex-gay" movement in Los Angeles sometime in September.

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Apostolos is a monthly newsletter presenting information and good news to the gay community and its friends. This publication represents the opinions of its co-editors, Jim Peron and Rev. Rick Miles, who are solely responsible for its contents. A yearly subscription is available for \$5 from Jim Peron, Box 2140, Glen Ellyn, IL 60137.

MORE EMPTY PROMISES

One of the lesser known "ex-gay" groups is Lifeline Ministry of Seattle, WA. Like most of the so-called "ex-gay" ministries Lifeline is fond of semantics. One of our major criticisms of the entire movement is its use of the term "ex-gay". The term is used lightly and actually means very little. Almost none of the groups define the term so as to mean one who has become heterosexually oriented who was previously homosexually oriented.

In a recent letter from Lifeline associate Douglas Houck the meaning of "ex-gay" came up for discussion. Houck claimed that that one becomes "ex-gay" via a process. However, it is a process which "means that the Lord does not take all of the temptation away. They will still come but we have a new power to have victory over them... By deliverance from homosexuality we mean that the process of sanctification (sic) has been started. It will take varying amounts of time for each person. There will come a time when the person will know that he has been set free from the power of homosexual temptation, but temptations will still come. He will know that he doesn't need to fall into the old sinful way. Sanctification (sic) will continue to work throughout the rest of his life. There will be a change in the homosexual orientation. It will affect his fantasy life. He will develop into a heterosexual, but he may first pass through many stages of being neither homosexual or heterosexual. Again different people will proceed at different rates and to different levels.... This still leaves the question about homosexual Christians. In reality that is a contradiction. Christians are forgiven. They can not be both homosexual and Christian, but they can face the temptations of homosexuality. There are people who are Christians and homosexual and say that the two can go together. They may be Christian, but as yet they don't understand the Bible's teaching on homosexuality and the power of Christ to change them from it."

The main problem with Houck's letter is its internal inconsistencies. First he tells us that becoming "ex-gay" is a process that continues throughout life and they he says that some people may become heterosexual. He does admit that most remain in some midway point where they are not homosexual or heterosexual. However he also points out that homosexual temptation will still come. In reality it seems that Lifeline is in the same boat as every other ex-gay group and is really saying that an ex-gay is a celibate homosexual. However by refusing to see that homosexuality is something a person is and not something a person does they can avoid the truth. The truth they so fervently want to avoid is that they are still homosexual in sexual orientation while remaining (supposedly) sexually celibate. Houck then goes on to say that people can not be both homosexual and Christian. In the very next sentence he contradicts himself and says "There are people who are Christians and homosexual...."

The Director of Lifeline Ministry is Sharon Harrington who authored a booklet "Homosexuality: A Christian Response". In this booklet Harrington wrote: "Does continued homosexual temptation after spiritual rebirth, and possibly times of failure, mean that a change has not taken place and the person is still, in fact, homosexual? The answer is NO!! A Christian experiencing homosexual desires is not a "Christian homosexual," but a Christian experiencing homosexual temptation. Forgiveness of ALL sins through Jesus Christ does not mean that a person is never going to be tempted to sin, or that a person will never again commit a sin. Those seeking to follow Christ will often experience temptation. In fact, often the most intense times of homosexual desire will occur after a person commits his or her life to Christ."

Ms. Harrington has an interesting way of describing an "ex-gay." According to her own words an "ex-gay" may still be someone who not only is still homosexual oriented but may still be periodically sexually active. The absurdity of the "ex-gay" logic becomes apparent when we compare it in reference to other practices which the church considers sinful. For instance, lets take Ms. Harrington's basic statement and apply it towards murderers. This comparison might come out something like this: "Does continued murderous temptations after spiritual rebirth, and possible times where one may actually murder, mean that a change has not taken place and the person is still, in fact, a murderer? The answer is NO!! A Christian who wishes to murder is not a Christian murderer but a Christian who is tempted to murder. Forgiveness of ALL sins through Jesus Christ does not mean that a person is never going to want to murder, or that a person will never murder again. Those seeking to follow Christ will often experience temptation. In fact, often the most intense time of murderous desire will occur after a person commits his or her life to Christ." Now we do not agree with Lifeline that homosexuality per se is sinful but if one were to accept their basic presuppositions one could not disagree that every other sin must fall into the same type of category. By this we mean that Christians who murder are not murderers, Christians who lie are not liars, Christians who steal are not thieves, etc.

Dr. James Tinney in SPIRIT JOURNAL Vol. 1, No. 2 wrote about homosexuality and Pentecostalism. Since, to our knowledge every "ex-gay" ministry is either Charismatic or Pentecostal Dr. Tinney's conclusions are applicable and we quote: "If the Pentecostal movement has been correct in these approaches to gays, what then have been the results? What successes have Pentecostals had in exorcising, "curing", or "delivering" homosexuals?not a single, solitary case exists where a believer has been freed from homosexual inversion. The most any Pentecostal ministry has been able to claim, is that it has enabled some (usually always unidentified) person to live for a short period of time without succumbing to, i.e., yielding to or participating in, overt homosexual activities. Even in these few instances, no clear testimony or name is released, respectfully because the failure rate of resistance to inverted gay desires is so short-lived."

Tinney then goes on to make some very important observations, "Pentecostals are thus being patently dishonest when they use the terms 'cured' or 'delivered' or 'freed' in reference to homosexuality. If all that Pentecostal experiences can offer is an indeterminate but conditional period of time when one is supposedly "enabled" to keep from giving in to his still-retained desires to commit a homosexual act, then Pentecostalism offers no more than will-power or positive-thinking approaches (which are certainly not unique to Pentecostalism at all). To continue to use such terms as "deliverance" and "cure" in reference to constant volitional suppression of one's own self and own desires is intellectually dishonest, theologically absurd, and terribly misleading to both the gays and the other members of our churches. Such careless mishandling of terminology not only robs these words of their potential significance, it also may lead others to be wary of these terms when similarly used in reference to "freedom" from guilt and condemnation and eternal punishment (the essence of the gospel). If observers are led to doubt promises of healing and 'deliverance,' then they may also doubt promises of forgiveness and grace and eternal life." (It is our hope to be able to reprint Dr. Tinney's entire article in the next issue of APOSTOLOS.)

Again we find the the empty, hollow promises of the ex-gay movement. The real danger of this is the fact that they are empty promises which by their nature must lead to disappointment and depression. Our one hope at APOSTOLOS is that the disappointment those seeking help from the ex-gays will feel not be directed towards Christ and His message.

SPECIAL NOTICE

With this issue APOSTOLOS will be doubling its size. From now on every issue will be eight pages in length. Even though we are doubling our size (and the work) we are still keeping our subscription rate at \$5 for twelve monthly issues. Subscription fees and some donations pay the entire cost. Why not subscribe for a friend? Subscriptions should be sent to Jim Peron, Box 2140, Glen Ellyn, IL 60137. Checks should be made out to Jim Peron.

WASHINGTON FOR WHO ?

The recent Washington for Jesus march gives us all something to think about. Over 100,000 people, most of them fundamentalists and Pentecostals marched on the capital. Why? According to the press releases from the Washington for Jesus people the reason was a call to national repentance. However, I, like many other people, have my suspicions that there was a hidden agenda involved in the march.

Originally many political issues were to be discussed at the rally but under pressure from other church groups the WFJ people dropped that and claimed a neutrality which by all indications was only skin deep. Speaker after speaker made reference to the same so-called "family" issues. Of course gay people were attacked time after time. One minister went so far as to name San Francisco as the most evil city in America. One can't resist pointing out that the minister was probably standing in the most evil city in America. As a matter of fact we at APOSTOLOS contend that the minister, and all those who participated in the march, are a part of that evil and actually encourage the evil.

What we mean is that the whole purpose of the rally was to encourage Congress to use power and force. One constantly heard from participants, "We hope Congress is watching, we hope the White House is watching, we hope the Supreme Court is watching." Why? Because the real agenda of the march wasn't a call to repentance but a call for power and coercion. The march called for the use of the police state to enforce fundamentalist standards by the fact that it chose Washington as the march site. Washington, while in need of repentance, doesn't represent anything but power politics.

Each of the participants could have repented, if that was the purpose, at home in their prayer closets. The rally on the streets of the center of American political power wasn't a show of repentance but a warning to the meglomaniacs on Capital Hill; a warning that America's fundamentalists intend to bring the moral revolution of the Ayatollah to the United States. You can bet that the power brokers will fall in line with the demands of the fundamentalists.

Our former pastor, Charles Meppelink of the First Assembly of God Church, Wheaton, IL, was interviewed on the Christian television network and he said that the repentance called for in the Old Testament was directed towards God's people not toward the heathen. Yet, the main call at the WFJ rally was for the nation to repent, not the individual Christians. It becomes clear to anyone familiar with Christian right wing politics that national repentance includes things like the Family Protection Act, Christian Voice and Moral Majority. National repentance, when finally interpreted, means anti-abortion laws, watering down the First Amendment, denying homosexuals their rights, and a return to the cold war mentality of the 50's.

Ultimately the rally was a violent act. All state power rests on the use of violence and laws, which go beyond the protection of individual rights, are the legitimization of that violence.

Christians are called to repudiate the use of force and violence in all areas of human interaction. We, as Christians, are called to a radical pacifism. One so radical that we cannot cooperate with the use of violence to deprive anyone of their rights. Yet we tend to ignore the fact that government is the most concentrated form of power and violence. Washington is the symbolic center of that power and violence and the march was an attempt to capture some of that power for the political opinions of the fundamentalists. Richard Gregg wrote in his book THE POWER OF NONVIOLENCE that:

Nonviolent resistance is the key to the problem of liberty in the modern state. That seems like a large claim until we begin to reflect upon the part which force and compulsion play in all the relationships in which the state takes part. All observers recognize that compulsion, intimidation and violence have been and still are a very large and perhaps predominating element in the state, and especially in political government.... The nonviolent resister believes that a large part of the activities of the state are founded upon a mistake, namely, the idea that fear is the strongest and best sanction for group action and association. He believes that fear is divisive and therefore cannot be the foundation for permanent unity and strength.... There we find substituted the more positive and growth-stimulating forces of intellectual curiosity, wonder, love, and cooperation. The nonviolent resister looks forward to the time when a similar realization will come in regard to the larger association of states."

Christ called us to defend the powerless and we can not do that as long as we justify the accumulation of power. The concentration of power is always dangerous to the powerless and the poor. Power, itself, is the root cause of oppression. No one can say they are opposed to oppression who advocates a more powerful state. Eventually that concentration of power will destroy the weak and powerless.

The Washington For Jesus march was a raw display of power. Christ doesn't call us to a carnal relationship of power and submission but to the Christian way of mutual, voluntary cooperation. The belief in power politics should have died with Hitler but it didn't. Washington is full of lobbyists who only desire is to accumulate more power on behalf of their clients. Like the evil lobbyists in Washington the Christians who participated in the march were there for power and control.

The marchers were right, we do need to repent in America; Rev. Meppelink was right, the church in America needs to do the repentance. Everyone of us who succumbs to the temptation to use the force and violence of government to advance our beliefs or to confiscate wealth in our behalf needs to repent.

We need to repudiate, once and for all, the demon of power. For these sins, Lord, we ask your forgiveness. Teach us the way of peace and love through your Spirit: Amen.

JAY DEACON - HIS RESPONSE, OUR .REPLY

In the March, 1980 issue of APOSTOLOS we reported our evaluations of the ministry of the Rev. Jay Deacon of Good Shepherd Parish, MCC-Chicago. Rev. Deacon understandably did not agree with our evaluation. We have printed below a response from Rev. Deacon and our reply to that response. The paragraphs in Rev. Deacon's response have been numbered by us and correspond to the sections numbered in our reply.

Jay Deacon

OUR REPLY

(1) I first learned of this publication's attack on me and what it chose to call my "ministry (?)" the week after Easter while at Kirkridge, a mountaintop spiritual retreat center in Pennsylvania. I'd gone to be nurtured by people I consider heroes of the faith, like Bob Raines and Howard Moody -- people who share the passions Peron and Miles so despise in me. A pastor from Maryland, trying sincerely to be a good liberal, had picked up APOSTOLOS at MCC/DC and subscribed, figuring it would help him understand gay Christians. Now he was across the table from me, and he told me what he had read.

(2) It has been perfectly clear for some time that Peron and Miles have little use for the radical vision of the Gospel I share with many in our Good Shepherd community, or with the inability many of us have to embrace the doctrines of orthodoxy with the ease Peron and Miles claim.

(3) But it's a long leap from disagreement on issues of faith -- and certainly politics (I find the Libertarian view individualistic in a way that violates my religious value of mutual responsibilities of human community) -- it's a long leap from that to thrashing, in print, somebody's ministry and godliness..

(4) It would hurt if it came from a credible source, but the credibility is blown in the irresponsibility of attributing to the pastor the contents of a church publication, and in the lie about THE GAY CHRISTIAN. Contrary to what Peron and Miles want their readers to believe, the General Conference voted last summer not to separate the budgets and thus production of the magazines. Let Peron and Miles explain why, if I'm such a bad guy in UFMCC's eyes, I'm still editor of TGC. Fact is, not all of IN UNITY's readers, and not all MCC congregations, want both kinds of magazines. TGC is controversial. It is also good, and it is greatly valued by its readers.

(5) Contrary to a style Peron and Miles seem to expect, GSP's pastor doesn't control the content of church publications. They ought to know that. In fact, I contend that they know it very well. I don't intend to join in the trashing of SHEPHERD'S STAFF, though. Our acclaimed magazine has done some notable things, none of them noted by APOSTOLOS. Like the women's spirituality issue, the intimate relationships issue, the spirituality and prayer issue, the one on alternative lifestyles. It's written by and about real people, and that goes for the one on male sexuality. And it doesn't quite have "graphic descriptions of orgies."

(6) The most galling line is the one that distinguishes GSP from "godly" MCC congregations. Because nothing is as important at GSP, or to me, than the nurturing of spirituality. Dogma never was a very useful companion to spirituality. But spirituality, deep "koinonia," growth, risk, new birth, grace -- these can be found at GSP. I wish you could hear the stories and testimonies of our people. And there are more people here than a year ago -- 25% more during the first quarter.

(7) I am grateful to God for my ministry and ours. It fills me with awe that gifts of healing and prophecy and caring flow through us. But true enough, modernday Pharisees won't like it. I submit therefore that the obscenity lies not in the honesty of the SHEPHERD'S STAFF, but in the

cheap loveless mudslinging of APOSTOLOS.

(1) First of all it seem presumptuous that Mr. Deacon would place himself on the same level of Bob Raines and Howard Moody, especially after calling them "heroes of the faith." The assumption seems to be that Mr. Deacon is as much a hero of the faith. We are surprised Mr. Deacon uses the sexist term "heroes" which automatically excludes all women. Mr. Deacon, however, surpasses earthly ability and takes on an aura of omniscience when he seems to be able to read our minds and informs us why we disagree with him on so many issues. It is a childish psychological ploy to attempt to triangle Raines and Moody into the disagreement. Deacon insinuates that to disagree with him is to disagree with "heroes of the faith" Moody and Raines. This is absurd.

(2) Deacon charges that we have "little use for the radical vision of the Gospel." What he is actually saying is that we have little use for his interpretation of the Gospel. We remind him that his interpretation of Gospel is not necessarily Gospel itself. Mr. Deacon claims that we have accepted orthodoxy with ease. By not defining orthodoxy in his statement he has made a charge without substance. The views of Deacon are a hodgepodge of popular absurdities such as worship for the Mother Goddess who was the original creator overthrown by the sexist patriarchs of the Old Testament. A recent issue of his church's newsletter went so far as to advocate the Mormon heresy that all humans are actually God in the flesh. The article said, "And the Word was made flesh; and the Word is made flesh, constantly and continually. Joan Smith is the Word made flesh; Steve Jones is the Word made flesh; and so are you; and so am I. Each one of us is one infinitesimal yet infinitely significant (sic.) portion of that Being we call God." The author did clarify that she is not a Christian though she is an active member of Good Shepherd Parish. Supposedly GSP has a statement of faith which claims to be Christian and thus makes it eligible for membership in UFMCC but it seems that statement means nothing.

(3) Deacon takes the unrelated issue of politics and attempts to tie it in with his reply. We have never hidden the fact that we are Libertarians and repudiate the use of force in human affairs. We disagree with Deacon and his support of Barry Commoner and his radical socialist party. We do not support the economic policies advocated by Deacon because they are, whether he knows it or not, based on the philosophical presuppositions used by Adolph Hitler and largely mimic the actual programs of Mussolini. None of this, however, is related to the issue.

Deacon chides us for "trashing, in print, somebody's ministry" in spite of the fact that his own publication has been notorious at doing the same thing. In THE GAY CHRISTIAN, January-March, 1980, on page 12 the Board of Elders of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Communist Churches are called "the low quality, institutionally anxious patriarchs of UFMCC." The lead article in TGC by Karen Ziegler is an attack on the Gay and Lesbian Seminars Conference held at Harvard Divinity School. In her article Ziegler claims that the Conference was so sexist "that women began to walk out. I was about the ninth woman to leave. I was disappointed and angry. Other women followed. I think I would have enjoyed communion, if the rest of the service had not been so intolerable." Both of us attended the service in question and we sat in the last row next to the only door in the Chapel; we can testify that no such walk-out took place. Yet, THE GAY CHRISTIAN

printed these falsehoods about our brothers and sisters who put together this fine conference. Deacon, himself, resorts to name calling in his analysis of why the Board of Elders separated TGC from IN UNITY when he says, "It would, however, be somewhat shattering to us to know for certain that most MCCers are as anti-intellectual, intolerant, dogmatic, and threatened by bold thinking as the Elders' decision seems to assume."

(4) Deacon charges that the Elders did not separate the budgets of the two publications and thus successfully answers a charge we did not make. We said the Elders separated the two publications because of the radical nature of TGC, we never once mentioned budgets. Deacon also says that the two publications were not split in production but TGC is put together in Chicago while IN UNITY is produced in Los Angeles.

Deacon calls his own publication "acclaimed" which I consider rather egotistical. In reality SHEPHERD'S STAFF is a poorly printed amateur attempt at a newsletter. TGC also is not acclaimed. As a matter of fact members of the clergy from the Southeast District of UFMCC said of TGC "it does seem totally inappropriate to officially release (even with a disclaimer) speculative theological arguments that call into ill repute Biblical authenticity, and the clearly stated Doctrine of UFMCC, and smacks, as one Elder says, of 'both paganism and heresy'." MCC Minister Stan Harris wrote, "...gods, goddesses, etc., have no place in the Christian scheme of things and are totally irrelevant as arguments against Divine Revelation or its relationship to us as a Christian people... To dismiss Genesis as a mere Chauvinistic plot to discredit women is to twist the theme of things." The South Central District Conference of UFMCC said, "Does this article [the one printed in TGC on the Mother Goddess] reflect the theological stance of UFMCC? If it does, why are we calling ourselves a Christian church?"

(5) Deacon claims that THE SHEPHERD'S STAFF "doesn't quite have 'graphic descriptions of orgies'." What method Deacon uses to decide this is beyond us so we will allow our readers to decide for themselves whether the section in question is graphic. We apologize for the language we will be printing but we see no other way to make our point. The following is word for word from TSS Vol. 11, No. 1. "I get out of my car and check my get up. Blue jeans, jock strap, construction boots, wool socks with red tops, flight jacket, flannel shirt I can unbutton later. Go into the suck-off palace and mill around with the others, all in butch drag, popping in and out of the little booths with glory holes. Maybe I won't speak to any one all the time I'm there. Usually I do; while I'm not doing it with someone. I talk to the tall man that looked like my friend Chuck. He goes off and sucks some cock; returns. I go off and get my cock sucked... Another time I'm in a booth, I growl, man in leather sucking me off, slaps my ass repeatedly... Hot man with hot body, many cruises, eventually we end up doing it. Cock ring and harness around his balls, uses a lot of aml. I think he should be a dancer, lift him up with one arm, suck like crazy and pull on his balls, hard. Later, he, I, and his lover go home; we do it some more, and then we snuggle up, arms around each other, with me in the center." This from a church newsletter!

(6) We did not distinguish GSP from other "godly" MCC congregations. What we said was that there are many godly MCC congregations. Also this statement was in another article and was in no way connected with our statements about GSP and Deacon. This statement was in reply to false charges made against UFMCC by Christian Voice the right-wing lobbying group. We are glad that attendance is up at GSP from a year ago, but it is still well below what it used to be under the previous pastor.

(7) We never charged TSS with being obscene because the term is too subjective. However, we do find it interesting that Deacon seemingly excuses the actions of TSS by calling

it "honest" while condemning us for being offended.

(Additional comments). We do not agree with Mr. Deacon on many issues and we both left GSP because of his theology and his anti-evangelical position. Deacon has told us that the Bible "condemns gay people but who cares?" In a recent issue of TGC this same disregard for Scripture is again shown in an article that says, "The Bible does in fact say that God's love is not available to unrepentant practicing homosexuals." Deacon has ridiculed, in our presence, UFMCC founder Troy Perry, for whom we have the highest regard and to whom we owe many thanks. Deacon has consistently made vicious attacks on evangelicals regardless of their stance on homosexuality. While not being literalist ourselves we feel that UFMCC must be theological wide enough in its acceptance to make room for literalists and all others who are Christians. THE GAY CHRISTIAN, however, takes a stance of exclusion in a recent issue and says, "Make room for literalism in the UFMCC and you have set about destroying it." Karen Ziegler, in TGC, attacks members of UFMCC for "the trend toward 'professionalism' and 'respectability'." Ziegler, however never defines what she means other than saying "I saw a lot of three-piece suits in L.A. [UFMCC General Conference] this summer.... Jesus would not wear three-piece suits."

The original conflict within UFMCC and which led up to our conflict with Mr. Deacon arises out of an issue of TGC which contained an article by Ziegler. Ziegler confesses that she has "ranted and raved about how the Genesis creation accounts were totally absurd and destructive, how I hated them, and how I wanted to write about my anger, my theories, and my mythology." She then set about writing her own sexist-Matriarchal version of the Mother Goddess and creation. Her conclusion is basically this, "All of the Old Testament creation stories were in some way a polemic against the goddess, and so against women. They worked. We have been believing them, on one level or another, for thousands of years. The worshippers of the male god Yahweh and/or his son have had to repeatedly call upon the original fabrication in order to legitimize their rejection of all that is female, dark, and/or sensual."

After many personal conversations with Mr. Deacon, after sitting in his church service, time after time, and after reading both THE GAY CHRISTIAN and THE SHEPHERD'S STAFF we are hard pressed to see why Deacon bothers to claim Christianity as his belief. We also fail to see why he remains in a denomination run by "low quality, institutionally anxious patriarchs" with a membership made up of members who are "anti-intellectual, intolerant, dogmatic, and threatened by bold thinking." These last charges we suspect are an act of projection. Fundamentalism is never pleasant but it is especially vicious when wrapped in the shrouds of liberalism.

Did You Know?

Congressman John Anderson recently came out in support of the gay rights bill presently before the House. This isn't surprising since Anderson has been on both sides of almost every issue within the last few years. In the last few months Anderson has become "born-again" on a number of issues in an attempt to form a liberal coalition to back his candidacy. Anderson's support of the bill is useless since he is a lame-duck Congressman anyway. Anderson claims that he did not previously support the bill (when it would have done some good) because no one asked him to support it. The National Gay Rights Task Force has been in contact with Anderson's office many times in the past. Anderson once authored a Constitutional Amendment that would have made Christianity the official state religion. Meanwhile officials in the Anderson campaign don't seem to be interested in having gay support for their candidate. Thom Higgins, a gay activist in Minneapolis has been asked to drop out of the race for a slate on the Anderson delegation because of his gay activism. Sharon Bailey, coordinator for Anderson in District 56B, and George Soule, head of Anderson's Minnesota campaign made the request. Higgins complied. ***** Libertarian psychologist Dr. Thomas Szasz recently told the American Psychiatric Association in a keynote address that "American psychiatry is Dan White's accomplice in crime." Szasz is an outspoken critic of the transference of behavioral problems into the medical realm by labeling them "mental illness." Szasz contends that psychiatry creates mythical "mental illnesses" to justify the regulation of behavior unappreciated by society. ***** Bunceton, MO, recently elected a gay man mayor. The 437 residents recently placed Gene Ulrich into office. ***** Cumberland, RI, for the second time in two years is faced with its own homophobia. Aaron Fricke, 18, a senior at Cumberland High School has requested permission to attend the Senior Prom with Paul Guilbert, also 18. Guilbert made a similar attempt last year. School principal Richard Lynch denied permission on the grounds of "the real and present threat of physical harm to you, your male escort, and others." Again we are denied our rights for our own good. Fricke has taken the school to court. Meanwhile in Allentown, NJ, School Superintendent Stephen Sokolow announced that an unidentified male student will be allowed to attend their Senior Prom with another male. A school attorney determined "there are no laws or school regulations that would prohibit a male student from bringing another male to the prom." ***** Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary recently canceled anti-gay evangelist James Robison as a speaker at its Bible Conference. Robison is reported to be very upset over that, but then Robison is always reported to be very upset over something. ***** St. Louis recently held its first Gay Pride Parade and drew a crowd of about 500 marchers. We congratulate them. ***** Gays in Florida recently raised over \$10,000 for mentally retarded children. We doubt Anita will comment on the event since there was no evidence of recruitment by the gays. ***** Officials with the city of Chicago recently complained about the left-wing U.S. Labor Party which has been harassing users of O'Hare International Airport with pro-nuclear material. According to a city official individuals who ignore the party members are verbally abused

and called 'faggots'." ***** Cuban refugees fleeing socialist Cuba have been called "social undesireables" by Castro. According to Castro this means that some of them are homosexuals. ***** In France transsexual Marie-Jose Enard will lose her child. The child was born to a prostitute who then gave it to Enard. Enard was forced to use forged identity papers because of the view the French government takes towards transsexuals. Enard was arrested for prostitution and this led to the discovery of the false papers. Because of this she will probably lose custody of the child. Judges in France have been known to offer lighter sentences to transsexuals if they have their breasts amputated. ***** In Spain the Catalan Gay Liberation Front was denied legal status by the government because they propagated views which contradicted "public morality." About 7,000 gays packed a sports arena for the fourth annual congress of the group. ***** A recent issue of THE INTERGER, the local paper of Integrity Chicago, called APOSTOLOS "an excellent monthly newsletter with 'information and good news to the gay community and its friends', edited by Jim Peron, an Evangelical layman, currently a communicant of the Metropolitan Community Church, and his friend the Rev'd Rick Miles. Peron has a forthright political leaning to libertarian positions, and the paper is, generally, reflective of that. It's the best of the Evangelical radical papers: good articles, reviews, and news notes." Recently the Brethren/Mennonite Caucus for gay concerns sent a letter out to a number of key church leaders urging them to subscribe to APOSTOLOS. We thank both groups for their support. ***** APOSTOLOS co-editor has recently joined the board of INTEGRITY FORUM, the national publication of Integrity. FORUM is attempting to expand beyond its Episcopalian readership and be more truly ecumenical. Both of the last two issues carried articles by Peron. **** Rick Miles and Jim Peron recently spoke to a class at Aurora College (Christian Adventist) on homosexuality. The class was extremely receptive and expressed a genuine interest in the plight of gay men and lesbians. Peron also recently spoke to a group of evangelical seminarians from the Chicago area. The Seminary Consortium on Urban Pastoral Education asked Peron to present the reality of being gay and Christian. Two SCUPE members spoke first and both presented pro-gay positions. ***** Prof. Tony Campolo will not be speaking at the Evangelicals Concerned conference on the east coast this summer. In his place will be Dr. James Tinney. ***** Rumor has it that Anita Bryant and husband Bob Greene are headed towards the rocks marriage wise. The story goes that a divorce is in the offering. Someone we know wondered whether or not Anita found a copy of Blueboy in Bob's shorts hidden away from the world. Having witnessed one of their fights personally we only wonder what took them so long. ***** U.S. District Judge Terence Evans ruled that the Army may not discharge someone because they are homosexual. The ruling stems from a case brought by Milwaukee lesbian Miriam Ben-Shalom who was discharged in 1976 because of her lesbianism. Ben-Shalom was ordered reinstated by the judge who said the discharge violated the First, Fifth, and Ninth Amendments to the Constitution. ***** Readers of this column are encouraged to send us news clips they find interesting which fits the general nature of this column. Clippings should be sent to APOSTOLOS, Box 2140, Glen Ellyn, IL 60137.

AN OPEN LETTER TO CHRISTIANITY TODAY

Recently CHRISTIANITY TODAY editorialized on the church and its response to homosexuality. Some of your points were valid and some of them seemed to be wishful thinking on your part. Others seemed like the "appropriate thing to say" with your readership and represented intellectual dishonesty on your part to keep the readers, who pay for their subscriptions, happy.

You correctly pointed out that "thousands of people - many of them evangelicals - are struggling over how their homosexual condition squares with Scripture...." Actually you understated your point since it is clear that millions are in this position.

You state, "Heterosexuality is the biblical norm." However, later in your editorial you are quick to suggest celibacy which is obviously not heterosexuality and therefore not the biblical norm. You state, "Homosexuality is one of many human conditions and activities resulting from the Fall." Yet you ignore the fact that celibacy is also a result of the Fall. Nothing in Scripture indicates that celibacy existed before the Fall. So you deny some Christians the right to live as homosexuals because you see homosexuality as non-normative and the result of the Fall. As an alternative you suggest they live a life of celibacy which is also non-normative and a result of the Fall. Consistency is not one of your virtues. Of course it is difficult to be consistent when one is attempting to be honest without offending the largely uneducated (in sexual issues) audience to whom you are writing.

You say, "The Bible does not distinguish between different kinds of homosexual activity." You also say, "The two Greek words translated 'homosexuals' or 'sexual perverts' in I Corinthians 6:9 may refer to the practice of pederasty, where older men have intercourse with young boys. If Scripture addressed the subject of homosexuality in this passage alone, one might be able to argue that Paul condemned only one kind of homosexual activity. But it is not at all clear that this was his intent. His other condemnations of homosexual activity make such an interpretation impossible. Therefore, in keeping with the whole of Scripture, Paul forbade homosexual activity in general, even in this passage."

The problems with this argument is that earlier you acknowledged that the sin of Sodom was "homosexual rape" and surely you must be able to distinguish rape from relationship. Are you saying the Bible does not make any distinction between a group of men raping another man and two men loving each other in a committed relationship?

What does the Bible say about homosexuality? You admit that Corinthians may refer to pederasty and you admit that the sin of Sodom was homosexual rape. You have no problem making distinctions yourself, which if one were to accept your premise that the Bible doesn't make such distinctions means you are going against the "clear teaching of Scripture." You admit in one part of the editorial that things really aren't as clear as Evangelicals would like to believe but you still knuckle under to cultural presuppositions and refer to the "clear" teaching

on homosexuality in the Bible.

You state that Paul's statement is consistent with the "whole of Scripture." How can this be if he may be talking about pederasty? How can this be when the Sodom account deals with rape? Paul's statement is only consistent with the whole of Scripture if one accepts that he was speaking about a specific kind of homosexuality. While the Sodom account deals with rape every other reference to "homosexuality" deals with temple prostitution. (I will be happy to document this if you wish.)

In 1 Timothy Paul uses the same word you say may mean pederasty so that verse isn't any longer as clear as you would like. This, I think, points out the error of your editorial. We have ruled out the Sodom account as referring to homosexual coupling, we have ruled out Corinthinas and Timothy, and we have ruled out every other reference we assumed pertained to homosexuality in the Old Testament. How can you say Paul's statement which may mean something else anyway is in keeping with the "whole of Scripture" when a case by case study rules out a consistent position in the whole of Scripture? What is the position the whole of Scripture takes? Is it a condemnation of rape, pederasty or prostitution? Are you also saying that Scripture doesn't distinguish between rape, pederasty and prostitution? If you are saying that I contend you presenting a case against the inspiration of Scripture.

Your editorial goes on to list myths that some Christians have accepted concerning homosexuals. The myths you list are indeed myths and you should be congratulated on discovering this.

You state that homosexuality is not something one does, but something one is. Good observation. Even some of our supporters have trouble understanding that. Of course you know that removes homosexual orientation from the realm of choice and where there is no choice there is no sin. Of course, if the orientation then is not sinful the acting out of that orientation cannot be sinful. The problem is that the only consistent position is one that says both orientation and behavior are sinful. While honestly attempting to grapple with the issue you accept positions that must lead to full acceptance of gay people as Christians. You, however, try to retain traditional conclusions which do not follow your own presuppositions. Either you must change your conclusions or you must change your presuppositions. Neither one of those alternatives, I realize, will be particularly easy.

You say that it is a myth that "one can always be cured of his or her homosexual condition by a Christian conversion experience." True! You point out that some homosexuals are celibate, also true. Then you say, some "homosexuals have been able to reverse their orientation to heterosexual." The documentation for this is awfully hard to find isn't it? Perhaps you should read HOMOSEXUALITY AND THE MIRACLE MAKERS.

At one time in another one of your editorials you said, "The miracle business is getting out of hand. The time has come for evangelicals to adopt a cautious attitude towards extravagant claims

and to reject accounts that are unsubstantiated. Common sense and belief in miracles should go hand in hand." You were very correct in that editorial; I suggest you go back and reread it for your own edification.

Where are these "cured homosexuals" that everyone is talking about? Why do you use the term "cure" which has medical connotations to describe something you attempt to place within the moral realm later? If homosexuals are sick then there is no grounds for condemning them morally. If they are sinful then you are in trouble because you can't explain why God isn't delivering them all from their orientation after conversion. As a matter of fact you call homosexuality a condition which is illogical if you see it as a moral behavior. Dr. Jack Hyles once told a

leading anti-gay minister, "I never saw a homosexual get converted who stayed straight." It isn't often that Dr. Hyles and I agree but neither have I.

We at APOSTOLOS appreciate your attempt to grapple with such a hard subject as homosexuality. We know how hard it is to deal with the issue. We also know that you made some major concessions which will lose you subscribers. However, we also see an attempt to walk the fence; to be honest and to please anti-gay readers at the same time. Like most fence walking you didn't do a very good job. The editorial was full of inconsistencies. Perhaps now you see that the "clear teaching of Scripture" is a little more elusive than you once thought.

connEction Chicago

A major conference on homosexuality and the Christian faith will be held in Chicago on the weekend of August 15th. Beginning on Friday night the conference will last until the afternoon of the 17th. A special emphasis will be placed on spirituality and ethics for gay Christians. The conference is being sponsored by Evangelicals Concerned and will be held at the Cenacle Retreat House near the heart of Chicago's gay community.

Christianity and the Homosexual Person

SPEAKERS AND WORKSHOP LEADERS

LETHA SCANZONI: A full-time professional writer whose articles have appeared in The Christian Century, The Reformed Journal, Medical Aspects of Human Sexuality, and many other periodicals. Among her most recent books are IS THE HOMOSEXUAL MY NEIGHBOR? (with Virginia Mollenkott), ALL WE'RE MEANT TO BE (with Nancy Hardesty), voted the most significant book of 1975 by Eternity magazine; and MEN, WOMEN, AND CHANGE: A SOCIOLOGY OF MARRIAGE AND FAMILY (with her husband, John).

DR. RALPH BLAIR: Founder and President of the Board of Trustees of Evangelicals Concerned. Dr. Blair is a psychotherapist in private practice in New York City. He is Director of the Homosexual Community Counseling Center.

DR. VAL CLEAR: Dr. Clear is the head of the Department of Sociology at Anderson College (Church of God), a member of the Board of Evangelicals Concerned and author of the article "The Anita Bryant Syndrome".

MARY BORHEK: Mary is the author of the excellent book MY SON ERIC which deals with her struggles as a Christian mother to come to grips with her son's homosexuality. Mary has become an active participant in the struggle to achieve equality for gay people.

PROF. PAUL SIEGEL: Prof. Siegel is a professor of Communications at Northwestern University and is the author of a new book tentatively titled WHY PEOPLE LOVE TO HATE GAY PEOPLE.

AUGUST 15, 16, 17, 1980

FOR MORE INFORMATION WRITE EVANGELICALS CONCERNED, 323 SOUTH FRANKLIN, SUITE 804, CHICAGO ILLINOIS 60606 OR APOSTOLOS, BOX 2140, GLEN ELLYN, IL 60137

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